

Pollution Prevention Practices in Auto Body and Paint Shops

Solvent Recycling

Automotive refinishing shops use a significant amount of paint thinner and solvent for spray gun cleaning. Used solvent combined with paint waste is often the largest waste stream in the shop and is managed by shipping to an off-site recycling facility or by recycling the waste on-site. In both on-site and off-site recycling, waste solvent is distilled to separate and reclaim solvent from the waste paint solids and solvent mixture. Recycling solvent on-site may help shops to reduce their regulatory requirements and future liability, and save money.

On-Site Recycling

Shops that use on-site solvent recycling systems have gained significant savings from reduced material and waste disposal costs. Shops have reduced solvent purchases by as much as 80% by recycling on-site. Various kinds of recycling equipment are available. Some units are integrated with a paint gun cleaner where the recycled solvent is transferred back to the cleaning unit without pouring or handling. Evaluate your specific needs before selecting a distillation unit.

Check with local agencies before you invest in an on-site recycler

On-site recycling may not be an option for your shop if the reclaimed solvent has a higher VOC content than is allowed for paint gun cleaning in your air district. If you recycle solvent on-site, the reclaimed solvent should be used only for paint spray gun cleaning. Avoid using reclaimed solvents for other purposes, such as degreasing or parts cleaning. Those activities are subject to air districts' solvent cleaning regulations that may have lower VOC limits than those for paint gun cleaning.

Make sure the unit is compliant with the Uniform Fire Code. Local fire departments may have additional restrictions for on-site solvent recyclers.

Off-Site Recycling

If you ship solvent waste off-site, look for a facility that processes waste solvent and returns clean solvent to you. If that kind of facility is not available in your area, look for one that recycles for reuse as cleaning or other solvent, not fuel. Choose a recycler or hazardous waste management facility that is [permitted by DTSC](#) and check their compliance history.

Consider the following when evaluating recycling options:

Solvent Recycling Options	On-site solvent distillation	Off-site solvent recycling service
Cost	\$2,500 to \$6,000 capitol cost \$3,400 per year O&M and HW disposal	\$18,000 per year for off-site recycling
Recycled product quality	Mixture of cleaning solvent and paint reducers depends on input	Recycled or virgin product; known components
Hazardous waste storage, handling, and disposal concerns	Owner responsible for properly managing still bottoms and unusable waste solvent; and for proper on-site storage and spill prevention.	Owner responsible for proper waste storage, and securing services of a licensed hazardous waste transporter.
Fire and electrical safety concerns	Distillation unit heats solvent creating potential hazard	Safe storage on-site until picked up

Regulatory concerns	Reclaimed solvents may exceed air district limitations on VOC content in gun cleaning solvents. Some local CUPAs and Fire Departments may not allow the use of on-site recyclers.	Off-site recyclers are responsible for obtaining all necessary permits and maintaining regulatory compliance at their facility.
End use concerns	Use recycled product for spray gun cleaning. Recycled solvent that is not used on-site is subject to hazardous waste regulations.	Some off-site facilities create fuel instead of cleaning solvent as an end product. Look for a service that produces recycled cleaning solvent.

Vendor contact information

(Other vendors may provide similar or identical products and services. Mention of trade names, products, or services does not convey, and should not be interpreted as conveying any government approval, endorsement, or recommendation.)

Becca	http://www.beccainc.com	800-655-5649	Solvent recycler and combination spray gun cleaner/recycler
Sidewinder	http://www.solvent-recycler.com/	702-362-9432	Solvent recycler
Herkules	http://www.herkulesequipment.com/	800-444-4351	Paint spray gun washers
Onsite Recycling Services	http://onsiterecyclingservices.com/	651-247-7414	Recycler, recycling gun washer
Safety-Kleen	http://www.safety-kleen.com	800-669-5740	Recycler, recycling gun washer, automatic spray gun washer
System One	http://systemonetechnologies.com	800-711-1414	combination spray gun cleaner/recycler
Uni-ram	http://uniram.com/products.html	800-735-4331	Solvent recycler and combination spray gun cleaner/recycler

Hazardous Waste Regulatory Requirements

For information on regulatory requirements contact your local [CUPA](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/InformationResources/local_contacts.cfm) online at http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/InformationResources/local_contacts.cfm or contact the [Department of Toxic Substances Control \(DTSC\)](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/ContactDTSC/duty_officers.cfm) at (800) 728-6942, http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/ContactDTSC/duty_officers.cfm

To get an EPA ID number, contact:

DTSC
Generator Information Services Unit
(916) 255-1136
(800) 618-6942

For additional information on auto body and paint shop pollution prevention practices and a list of available publications contact:

DTSC
Office of Pollution Prevention and Technology Development
P.O. Box 806
Sacramento, CA 95812-0806
(916) 322-3670

(800) 700-5854

<http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/PollutionPrevention/index.cfm>

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